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ABSTRACT

There are two unifying theses underlying these three papers: (1) the importance of the human relationship factor; and (2) the need to clearly understand what we wish to do and how most successfully to do it. The first paper, concerning counselor education, compares a behavioral counselor education model with a model which is related to the client-centered approach. Having pointed up the shortcomings of the behavioral model, the author concludes that it is not strictly a behavioral model, but one which should be helpful in evaluating and revising current approaches to counselor education. The second paper specifies what the author considers to be the most important ingredients for successful workshops, institutes or short courses: (1) limited topic; (2) use of multiple media; and (3) close, informal relationships with the participants. The final paper explores current difficulties in counseling research and focuses on the lack of definition of counseling and the acceptance of a too inclusive model which cannot even be utilized without years of prior research. In view of this apparent present trend, the author indicates several aspects which he feels must be considered if progress in research is to continue. (TL)

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SOME RANDOM COMMENTS ON A SYSTEMATIC MODEL FOR COUNSELOR EDUCATION[1]

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The statement that counselor education does not currently have a counselor training model may be true. It depends upon what we mean by a model, and what we consider to represent counselor education. No doubt, as the presenters state, many counselor education programs consist of a group of courses designed to meet state certification requirements, or in some cases to meet the recommendations of the APGA-ACES statements. While there are differences among state certification requirements, there are also basic common core requirements. Presumably these are not random lists of courses or areas of study, but have some systematic basis. The APGA-ACES statements were developed to provide a model to represent the best thinking of professionals in the field, and thus constitute a systematic rather than a random approach. The criticism that there is no systematic organization apparent in counselor education programs may well be true. To some extent this may be because counselor educators fail to present to students the theoretical, philosophical or systematic bases for the program. These bases are not always apparent in course sequences. And, insofar as programs allow students to use a cafeteria approach to counselor education, so that they take courses in any order which may be convenient, especially to the part-time student, it is difficult if not impossible to defend any systematic sequential approach.

There have been suggestions that we ought to take a look at counselor education programs to determine what it is we want students to know and to be able to do at the conclusion of their preparation and then organize this into a program. Certainly such a review of goals and outcomes is desirable at periodic intervals. My personal opinion in regard to this is that, although there may be some changes in desirable outcomes, these outcomes are rather constant or stable, and thus the curriculum content and experiences remain rather constant. I suspect that if we were to consider the organization of such content and experiences we would end up with an organization quite similar to that which we have now. This is basically because we can't do everything at once, that some things must precede others, and related things should be put together. My feeling is that present course content and organization did not develop in a random manner, but represents an attempt at systematic organization and sequencing.

I would also like to suggest that there is a training model which is systematically employed by some counselor educators (or at least one). This is the model for counselor preparation which is related to the client-centered or relationship approach to counseling. This model has been in existence for over 25 years, and I am interested in considering the model which has been presented in comparison with this model.

A model for counselor education or counselor preparation should obviously be related to the model for the counseling process accepted by the educators or instructors. Client learning should involve the same principles as counselor learning. If it is believed that counseling is basically a conditioning or reconditioning process, or that behavior change is most effectively achieved by such methods then it is not only reasonable, but logically dictated, that programs to change student behavior should be constructed according to the same model.

Thus, even though the proposed model does not dictate what the content of a program should be, it is questionable that the behavioral counselor education

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model can be used to prepare students for any orientation to counseling. If there is a contradiction or inconsistency between the theory, concepts, and methods of learning and teaching of this model, and the model of counseling represented by a particular orientation this cannot be the case.

Let us see if the behavioral counselor education model presents a model of learning which is inconsistent with a relationship model of counseling.

The presenters first note that they are rejecting a limited view of behaviorism, a view which refused to deal with thoughts, feelings and attitudes, which traditional behaviorists pretend do not exist or if they do exist, do not make a difference. They further note that it is important that students communicate their thoughts and feelings to the counselor education staff, with resulting clarification in the process of communication. Thus they are not actually behaviorists in this respect, even though they reject such concepts as ideal-real self discrepancies (which as a matter of fact can be measured), inferiority complexes (which can be defined as a measurable attitude toward the self) and unconscious behaviors.

Behaviorism is not alone or unique in not accepting the trait model of personality, or rejecting the medical model of behavior disorder. The presenters however do appear to accept what is perhaps a unique, and limited, even erroneous concept of behavior as being a function only of the situation or the external stimulus. Behavior is actually a function of the person in interaction with (not and) the situation. Researchers in behaviorism have been forced to recognize the influence of the history of the organism on its behavior. One of the most significant classes of determiners of behavior in a situation are the expectations and the resulting perceptions which the person brings to the situation. Behaviorism has up to now ignored, or certainly minimized, the whole field of the influence of needs and expectations on perception, and the recent discoveries of the influence of the social psychology and demand characteristics of the situation on the results of experiments and on all interpersonal relationships. It has been these variables which have been at the core of the perceptual or phenomenological approach to human behavior.

The attention to the goals of counselor education is important. Perhaps this is one of the major contributions of the behaviorists, that is, directing attention to the matter of goals, rather than requiring highly specific or currently measurable goals. The latter could be a disservice rather than a contribution. It appears that this aspect of behaviorism is in danger of dominating what counseling is learning from behaviorism. To ignore broader, more significant, more complex goals simply because at this time we cannot completely describe, define and measure them, and to accept and freeze ourselves to simple, concrete, highly specific goals simply because they are easily observed and measured is to prevent progress toward developing ways to define and measure the former. All that is required is that in principle our concepts be susceptable to definition and measurement. We cannot allow the behaviorists to again delay the development of scientific inquiry by ignoring or denying the existence or significance of everything which cannot be easily seen, touched and felt, and concretely measured. Bandura notes that "the emphasis on behavioral specification of goals is not intended to encourage the selection of inconsequential outcomes." However, this is too often the actual result.

I am disappointed that the consideration of the goals of counselor education was avoided because this is so important and so neglected. It would appear that the model presented is not so much a model of counselor education as a model for a model, or the specifications for a model, since it does not deal with actual goals or content.

The discussion of transfer of training gives me an opportunity--or I will make it an opportunity--to comment on the matter of the amount of structure or systematization which is necessary or desirable and on the current interest in what might be called the micro-teaching of micro-counseling.

While it would be generally agreed that teaching or counselor education should be based upon learning theory and principles, there can be wide differences regarding what this means as far as actual practice is concerned. It remains true that there is no single theory of learning, and that there are no generally agreed upon principles or techniques of learning. Thus, it is an open question whether a highly structured, planned and ordered, systematic sequence is more effective than a more global, less structured, less systematic approach. I admit that I tend to prefer a structured, sequential approach. However, this is perhaps related to my own needs--or dare I say a personality trait represented by the Pt scale of the MMPI. However, I am glad to report that I have changed in 15 years of counselor education, and can now tolerate a freer, less structured situation. I haven't checked to see if my Pt score has decreased.

What I am concerned about is that if we accept the behavioristic approach to counselor education, we can easily adopt a mechanistic approach where specific stimuli are applied to elicit specific responses. I believe that such an approach would not be effective, and behavioristically oriented counselor educators would soon realize this--since they are presumably sensitive to outcomes of their methods--and it would soon be abandoned. I am also sure that this is not a major aspect of the model which has been presented.

Another aspect of this is the current interest in so-called micro-counseling. In this approach to counselor education, the behaviors of the counselor are presumably broken down into small, specific, discrete elements, and then taught to the counseling student. An example (perhaps the only one so far) is attending behavior. It seems to me that this is a dead-end approach to counselor education. I do not believe it is an efficient method of counselor education. Nor do I believe it can be effective. It is based on the assumption that learning by parts is superior to learning by wholes, and that the parts can be integrated into the whole. I would suggest that the evidence of research on part-whole learning indicates that for this kind of situation the whole method is superior, and I would further question whether, if discrete responses or techniques are learned, they could be put together into whole that is more than a patch-work of techniques. Humpty-dumpty, you may remember, was never put together again. Moreover, if it is possible to use the whole method, and if this method is effective--and experience and research demonstrates that both these statements are true-then it is not necessary, except possibly to satisfy research interests, to resort to the part method.

It is interesting, in this regard, to note the emphasis placed upon modeling in the model presented, and indeed, in behaviorism in general. This method is anything but a part approach. It is not, in fact, a method or technique discovered or developed by behaviorists or one which is based on learning theory or experiments. It is in fact the earliest method of learning,both in the history of mankind and in the history of the individual organism. Behaviorists have no monopoly on modeling. It is present in most learning situations, and in all approaches to counseling and to counselor education. It is of course, the basis for the statement or aphorism "What you are speaks so loudly I can't hear what you are saying." The inclusion of modeling in a model for counseling or counselor education thus does not make it a behavioral model.

I am somewhat concerned about the suggestion that the counselor educator deliberately act as a model. I don't think this means that the counselor educator is an actor performing a role. He can only accept and recognize that he is a model, and thus realize that students are learning, for better or for worse, from him as a model.

The recognition of the counselor educator as a model emphasizes the importance of relationship factors in counselor education, since it is essentially aspects of interpersonal relationships which are modeled. It is significant that we are currently seeing a recognition of the importance of the relationship in the teaching and learning of subject matter. Despite the development of technology in education, represented by teaching machines, audio-visual aids and other mechanical gadgets, we are coming to realize that it is not technology which is important in teaching but the relationship between student and teacher. And it is significant that the same relationship factors which are effective in counseling are those which are effective in teaching--empathy and understanding, respect, realness and genuineness on the part of the teacher. These factors are important in subject matter teaching as facilitators of learning. They become even more important in counselor education which includes, in addition to subject matter, the development in the student of these factors themselves. While their acquisition by students may be viewed as occurring through modeling, the process may also be viewed as one of learning through reinforcement. From this point of view, the presence of these relationship factors may be viewed as the most powerful or most effective reinforcers for the development of the factors themselves in students as well as in clients.

My comments should not be taken as negative criticisms or rejection of the model which has been presented. The model is not strictly a behavioral model. My comments would suggest that such a model would not be acceptable. It is to the credit of the presenters that they have not been taken in by a narrow, mechanical behaviorism. They have done us a service by utilizing behaviorism to call our attention to deficiencies in counselor education and suggesting some remedies. The contribution of behaviorism is that it calls our attention to the importance of considering and defining outcomes, of evaluating our methods and approaches against these outcomes, and of developing and applying methods and approaches which systematically lead to our contribute to these outcomes. The model which has been presented should be of value in helping counselor educators evaluate and revise current approaches to counselor education.

Some Comments on Short-Term Programs for Employment Service Personnel

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The following comments derive from experience in conducting a two-week program in interviewing for Employment Service interviewers on a regional basis; a two-week workshop in manpower services for 100 Illinois State Employment Service community workers; a one-week workshop on counseling theory and practice for senior counselors of the Illinois State Employment Service, and three two-week workshops in group counseling for the U.S. Department of Labor with participants selected from the country as a whole.

1. The usual workshop, institute, or short course is a hodge-podge, attempting to cover too many areas, including too many speakers or presenters, and with no integration or systematic organization around a major theme, topic, or content area. Such programs, in my opinion, are of little value. I have refused to conduct such programs, although I have frequently been a speaker in them. The speakers usually "blow in, blow off, and blow out," one after the other in an interminable succession.

Even a program with a limited topic is usually conducted with little if any concern for presenting a unified, integrated approach which the participant can take away with him. A program on counseling, for example, will have a series of presentations of different approaches or theories by different experts. The participants are left with the conclusion that the experts all disagree, and there is nothing of useful or practical value for their work.

In contrast, our workshops have limited themselves to a single area or topic---interviewing, counseling, group counseling--and have been organized around a systematic treatment or approach. They have presented a systematic theoretical

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base, which is developed into principles for application, with of course consideration for the problems of application in the work situation.

We are not ashamed of theory, and refuse to accede to the demand for something practical. As Lewin put it, there is nothing so practical as a good theory. Specific methods or techniques are usually applicable only in specific situations. Principles provide the bases or criteria for determining what should be done in any situation. It is a mistake here, as in any teaching program, to pretend to be neutral or objective. The person who is neutral and objective never acts or does anything because he can never make up his mind.

We have found that a systematic, integrated approach based upon theory is not resisted by participants when they understand what we are attempting to do. Nor is it over their heads. We have high expectations of the participants, and they are met. One of my basic principles is never to underestimate your audience. I have never been disappointed. I have, however, seen many disappointed audiences and individuals who have been talked down to--including Employment Service counselors who have attended conferences and workshops at some of our leading universities. I have been very impressed with the calibre of Employment Service personnel. They are not only dedicated people but able, intelligent people. Of course, it is necessary to adapt the presentation to the audience. But even in the workshop with community workers, most of whom had no more than a high school education, our emphasis was on a theory of human behavior and human relations.

2. The medium is not the message, ~~is not the message~~, in my opinion. But the medium, or the methods of communication, is as important as the message. Two aspects are important here: (a) The use of multiple media. Thus we use lectures, demonstration video-tapes, small group discussions, and participation in counseling groups. (b) Close, informal relationships with the participants. This is in

part related to the small discussion and counseling groups. It is possible because our entire staff participates on a continuing basis throughout the workshop as discussion group and counseling group leaders. We do not delegate these functions to graduate assistants as is usually done. These are the most important aspects of the program and they should be staffed by experienced regular staff members. Although lectures are part of the program, they are presented as informally as possible. Above all, there is well prepared content and not the all too common off-the-cuff presentations which insult the audience. You may get away with this at an APGA Convention, but not with a group of Employment Service counselors.

The entire atmosphere is one of informality and the participants are treated as professional equals. The informality extends to the sharing of social events. Participants are invited for an evening social gathering in my home. The informality does not include irregular scheduling, however. All sessions start on time--and end on time.

4. Evaluation. Each group is asked to evaluate the program at its conclusion. No formal follow-up has been done. Sometimes I think the emphasis on follow-up is overdone. Unless you are not doing your best and presenting the best program you know how, follow-up can be of little help. It can only confirm that you are not doing it well. But you can improve only if you know better ways of doing it. And if you do, then you should have done it that way to begin with.

We have heard from a number of the participants in our former workshops. They write us. Quite a few attend APGA and we talk with them. From what they write and tell us, it seems that their experience has made a difference to them.

We do have testimonials, a few of which will serve as samples and as my conclusion.

a) I found this institute the most valuable outservice training I've had since working with the Employment Service.

b) I had no feeling of being talked down to--a characteristic of a number of institutes planned by colleges for out-of-college students.... My expectations formed by earlier experiences with Employment Service training were happily not realized.

c) This has been the most knowledgeable and meaningful experience I have had.

d) The openness rather than a dogmatic approach was refreshing.

e) This was one of the most complete and intensive courses of instruction I have ever participated in.

f) Both my knowledge and attitudes were changed.

g) I've never felt I benefitted more from any educational experience program.

h) I came, I saw, I listened, I learned; my cup runneth over.

Such comments reflect the so-called "Hello-Goodby" effect which is subject to criticism. But if such feelings and attitudes are <u>not</u> present following a workshop, it is unlikely that much else of a positive nature has been achieved. We have had reports from a number of participants that they were actually engaged in group counseling in the Employment Service. Can you believe it? They did not believe it could happen while they were with us. But it has happened, even in the Employment Service!

SOME BARRIERS TO SIGNIFICANT RESEARCH IN COUNSELING*

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Research in counseling or psychotherapy has increased tremendously in the past few years. Strupp and Bergin (1969) considered approximately 2,500 references in their recent evaluation. Much of the research, however, is of little relevance or value. This is not only because of the complexity of counseling and psychotherapy and thus the difficulty of conducting definitive studies. There are barriers to significant research which consist of the failure to resolve certain prior issues, and because of the persistence of certain orientations toward the problem which are not likely to lead to productive or significant research. I shall consider some of these barriers.

1. The first barrier is a lack of a definition of what we are concerned about. A perusal of research purporting to relate to counseling or psychotherapy makes it clear that there is no agreement what counseling or psychotherapy is. Two recent definitions are as follows:

   a. "The term <u>therapy</u> is to be defined in its broadest sense so as to include all professional endeavors designed to help or modify the behaviors of others; and forms and modes of individual and group 'therapy' currently being offered to the public are to be included, regardless of whether the term 'therapy' is used to describe a particular procedure" (Blau, 1969).

   b. "The use of learning or other psychological behavioral modification methods in a professional relationship to assist a person or persons to modify feelings, attitudes, and behavior which are intellectually, socially or emotionally maladjustive or ineffectual" (District of Columbia Licensing Bill).

   It is obvious that such definitions pose serious problems professionally and politically. They also pose research problems. Counseling or psychotherapy appear to include all methods or attempts to change or modify behavior which utilizes psychological methods, theories, techniques or principles. This clearly includes the entire area which has been designated as teaching or instruction. With such a broad definition, encompassing many quite different methods of behavior modification, it should be apparent that studies purporting to deal with counseling or psychotherapy may involve quite different things. In my opinion, such broad definitions are not only useless, but confusing. They do not define or delimit, and there is no homogeneity among the many things included--or at least there are significant differences. We either must define counseling and psychotherapy in such a way that it designates a homogeneous area, or we must use some way, such as modifiers or subscripts, to indicate just what is meant each time we use the term. Counseling is not counseling is not counseling. Much of the confusion in current research is related to the fact that different studies are dealing with different things. This is more than a quibbling over terms; we simply must agree on what we mean when we talk about counseling or psychotherapy.

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2. There is currently being proposed an approach to research which is represented as the direction in which we should be going. Four statements of this approach are as follows:

   a. "What we need to know in which procedures and techniques, when used to accomplish which kinds of behavior change, are most effective with what kind of client when applied by what kind of counselors" (Krumboltz, 1966).

   b. "The old question of, 'Is counseling effective?', or 'Which counseling theory is correct?' are seen as largely rhetorical. They give way to questions of, 'Which treatments in the hands of which counselors can offer what benefits to particular clients?'" (Blocher, 1967).

   c. "What is the appropriate question to be asked of outcome research? In all its complexity, the question towards which all outcome research should ultimately be directed is the following: What treatment, by whom, is most effective for this individual with that specific problem, and under which set of circumstances?" (Paul, 1967).

   d. "The problem of psychotherapy research...should be reformulated as.... What specific therapeutic interventions produce specific changes in specific patients under specific conditions?" (Strupp and Bergin, 1969, p. 20, see also p. 46).

   With such eminent people making this proposal, it might appear foolish to question it. Nevertheless, this is exactly what I propose to do. This is a revival of the old question of differential diagnosis and differential treatment, recognized by Ford and Urban (1967).

   A first reaction to such suggestions (after admitting that they sound very rational and logical), might be: "Nice work if you can do it, but you can't do it even if you try." Such research would require (a) a taxonomy of behavior changes, (b) a classification system for clients and/or client problems, (c) a classification of counseling approaches and treatments, and (d) a classification system for counselors. We would need to postpone any research on counseling or psychotherapy until these prior requirements were met, which optimistically would require 20 to 30 years, or, pessimistically, and in my opinion realistically, never. At present we have practically no idea of the relevant variables. Blocher seems to think that such variables as client and counselor age, sex, intelligence, education, and socioeconomic level are relevant. I do not believe they are. Heterogeneity in other (more relevant) variables within each category of such classifications destroys their usefulness.

   Even if such requirements could be met, I believe this is not a desirable or useful approach to research in counseling or psychotherapy. Its apparent attractiveness is related to my first point, that is, the lack of a definition of counseling or psychotherapy. To accept this model for research is to accept the concept or assumption of differential diagnosis and differential treatment which, within the area of functional emotional disturbance, has failed to obtain the support of experience or research over a period of several hundred years. The appeal of differential treatment is based on the assumption that there exist, or potentially exist,

discriminably different methods, approaches or techniques, of counseling or psychotherapy. Now if by psychotherapy we mean any helping relationship, any psychological treatment method, there may be some validity in this assumption. There are different methods of helping people psychologically--giving information, advice, suggestions, teaching, conditioning, reconditioning, desensitizing, modeling, skill training--and counseling or psychotherapy. A legitimate problem, then, is determining when counseling or psychotherapy (in some homogeneous, restricted sense of the terms) is appropriate, and when something else is indicated.

Except in this broad sense, to accept this model for research is to abandon an approach to research in counseling and psychotherapy which has become highly productive for one which cannot even be begun until many years of prior research has been completed. There is now a considerable body of research which clearly demonstrates that there are common elements in all the major theoretical approaches to counseling or psychotherapy, elements which are necessary for all facilitative human relationships, though not sufficient for all methods of behavior change. Further research should be directed to better defining, isolating and measuring these conditions, searching for other possible conditions, and determining when these conditions are sufficient and when they are not sufficient for behavior change.

3. This approach is, of course, not a simple one. To some extent it is concerned with the problems of differentiating among clients and client problems, and it is concerned with the outcome or criterion problem. But it at least attempts to restrict the problem, drawing a line somewhere between counseling or psychotherapy and other methods of behavior modification such as teaching, and thus limiting to some extent the kinds of outcomes of concern. It depends clearly on some agreed upon, at least approximate, definitions of counseling or psychotherapy and upon its goals.

   The problems remain complex, so complex, in fact, that no single study or perhaps even a manageable program of study could be developed as a crucial experiment. It would appear to be impossible to measure or control all the relevant variables at once. A simple example is the design of the study by Paul (1966). In the attempt to control for therapist personality, each therapist employed three methods of treatment. But by achieving this control, it was not possible to control for the relevant factors of therapist experience, competence and, perhaps most important relative degree of confidence or belief in each method.

4. It is possible that we are looking in the wrong direction for relevant client and counselor variables. It is not the demographic variables which are relevant. It is not the behavior variables of anxiety, hallucinating, phobias of this, that and the other thing. It is not the techniques of conditioning, reconditioning or deconditioning or desensitization, apart from relationship variables if they could be separated. (Parenthetically, the paradigm of the specificity of desensitization as the treatment for phobias has collapsed with the discovery that modeling is more effective. I anticipate that modeling will become

recognized as a generally effective method, and precisely because it involves relationship factors.) Again, it is not measured personality characteristics of counselors which are relevant.

The relevant variables in both client and counselor are beliefs, expectations, enthusiasm and attitudes. It is almost a truism that any method in which both the counselor and the client believe or have faith is effective for almost any kind of behavior change. This is no doubt the basis for much of the success of behavior therapy. The paradox of evaluating the effectiveness of a particular method of counseling or therapy is this interaction of method and belief: No one who has not really tried it can believe in it, but one cannot really try it without believing in it. Methods and techniques are ways of implementing attitudes and beliefs. The conditions of empathy, respect, and genuiness are manifestations of attitudes and beliefs. Thus if we want to equate, match or control for therapist variables, these are the relevant variables. If we want to control or study the effects of client variables, the beliefs and expectations of the client are the relevant variables. These are the operational or relevant aspects of counselor and client personality. It is also these factors which make real control groups or placebo groups difficult to set up. If one can succeed in equating these factors, is the control group actually a control group? The placebo, as a psychological variable, includes some of the essential conditions of counseling or psychotherapy.

5. If we accept that there are common elements which have been demonstrated to be effective with a wide variety of clients with a wide variety of problems for a wide variety of outcomes, then it would appear desirable to attempt to study the situations, problems, or clients where these conditions do <u>not</u> seem to be effective. One possibliity is that the conditions are not being implemented, or communicated by the counselor, or perceived by the client. Thus, instead of looking for new or different methods or techniques to use with disadvantaged, lower class, nonverbal clients, we should attempt to implement the conditions in ways which will be effective. A recent study concluded that "when middle class therapists become interested in working with patients from lower economic levels they have just as much success with them as they do with middle class patients" (Wiens, 1968).

This has not been a systematic analysis of research in counseling or psychotherapy, for which I have neither the time nor the space. In view of the apparent present trend of research, it seems desirable to indicate several aspects which are being neglected and which, in my opinion, must be considered if progress in research is to continue.

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